

## CONSULTATION

**(Proposed changes and/or additions to the waiver are in Red Text)**

**Page Number in the Original Approved Waiver where a change takes place is highlighted in Yellow at the top of the section**

### **Page 14 from Original Approved Waiver**

An SEA must meaningfully engage and solicit input from diverse stakeholders and communities in the development of its request. To demonstrate that an SEA has done so, the SEA must provide an assurance that it has consulted with the State's Committee of Practitioners regarding the information set forth in the request and provide the following:

1. A description of how the SEA meaningfully engaged and solicited input on its request from teachers and their representatives.

During the initial offering of flexibility, the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) worked proactively in taking advantage of its extensive communication network and infrastructure to engage and consult with stakeholders regarding the key components of the state's flexibility plan. This includes initiating dialogue with the leaders of various education interest groups, soliciting input from the then State Superintendent of Public Instruction's numerous advisory groups (including his Superintendents Advisory Council and Principals Advisory Council), all local superintendents in the state, and Indiana's Title I Committee of Practitioners.

Given the tight timeframe between release of the application and the deadline for submission, IDOE sought to distribute and discuss the state's plan with as many stakeholders as quickly and efficiently as possible. IDOE circulated the draft plan in a targeted manner for review and employed a survey tool to collect feedback in an organized way. IDOE held a meeting via WebEx to discuss the plan and solicit feedback from the Committee of Practitioners.

Additionally, IDOE shared details of this plan during a series of teacher forums—which include presentations by the then State Superintendent and IDOE staff as well as question and answer time with attendees—held in eight cities throughout Indiana in recent weeks.

The feedback received on the plan was positive, and very few suggestions were offered. A member of our Title I Committee of Practitioners encouraged IDOE to identify methods to clearly communicate to parents any changes stemming from being granted the requested flexibility, and as a result the IDOE built communication with parents into our ESEA Flexibility communication strategy.

Since the time of initial submission of the waiver application in November of 2011, IDOE staff has communicated with a number of educator groups about the waiver, fielding feedback whenever it is offered. Those groups include the following:

- Email to all teachers in the state via IDOE's periodic teacher electronic newsletter
- Superintendents Advisory Council
- Principals Advisory Council

- Non-Public Education Association representatives
- Indiana Education Reform Cabinet
- The Educator Learning Link Ambassadors Program (teachers who have volunteered to be IDOE “ambassadors” within their school buildings)
- Teacher Advisory Council (Teacher of the Year and Milken winners)
- Indiana does not have a formal ELL-related teacher association or group with whom to meet, but see the answer question 2 below for our best efforts at consulting with representatives of this group.

It is important to note that collaboration and communication are not just activities the IDOE initiated within **period of waiver application**. In fact, IDOE has made educator and community outreach a key priority in **its** strategy to comprehensively transform student outcomes in Indiana. Along with collaboration with regard to the state’s flexibility plan, IDOE has gathered input from educators, parents, and the public on every reform initiative—from state accountability metrics and teacher evaluations to Common Core implementation and performance-based compensation systems. Without a doubt, frequent input and constant two-way communication have been instrumental in the successful passage of “Putting Students First,” Indiana’s groundbreaking education agenda passed into law in the spring of 2011.

To ensure the successful implementation of these reforms, IDOE has dedicated an unprecedented amount of time and energy to personally meeting with educators throughout the state. **The then State Superintendent** visited schools in 81 of Indiana’s 92 counties since taking office in **2009**, engaging in direct dialogue with students, parents, teachers, administrators and community leaders. Since August 2010, **the then Superintendent** personally met with more than 9,000 educators in a variety of settings to present reform proposals, hear feedback and suggestions, and answer important questions regarding the new education laws. He met with educators in many formats, including public forums, informational and small group meetings at schools across the state, teacher/principal/superintendent advisory groups, and one-on-one conversations with school leaders and teachers in his office.

In addition, IDOE staff met with more than 30,000 educators during that same time period, sharing details of exciting new reform initiatives—like Indiana’s trailblazing Growth Model—and supporting educators as they work to implement reforms like locally-developed educator evaluations. At the same time, IDOE seized upon the intersection of the four principles of ESEA flexibility and Indiana’s recently enacted legislation to illustrate to stakeholder groups across Indiana the close alignment between state and federal priorities. This intersection provides local school districts for the first time an unprecedented opportunity to leverage federal and state resources in supporting the challenging work of school innovation and improvement.

Additionally, the IDOE **sent** via email biweekly updates directly to about 100,000 teachers and other stakeholders. These updates provided **yet** another vehicle for IDOE to promote the opportunities of ESEA flexibility and to collect feedback. For example, the state’s proposed accountability plan, described in greater detail as part of Principle 2, was greatly enhanced as a direct result of input received in response to these communications to the field.

The department also maintained an open-door policy with members of the Indiana State Teachers Association as well as other groups representing education professionals. The department held at least seven meetings with ISTA senior officials during the 2011 legislative session and continues to work with teacher representatives at the local and state level. In addition, IDOE continues to enjoy a productive relationship with the Indiana Association of School Principals and the Indiana Association of Public School Superintendents. Both groups made substantial contributions to the revamped school accountability process.

IDOE created specialized advisory boards and councils so members can contribute significantly to the development of important initiatives and tools as well as share information with other educators and provide regular feedback. For example, The Educator Learning Link (TELL) was a network of educators who volunteer to share with colleagues in their buildings important updates from IDOE. The Indiana Educator Reform Cabinet (IERC) was another group of eager and committed teachers who devote about thirty hours per year to organizing regional meetings and discussing and providing useful input on education issues and IDOE initiatives. All of these groups were engaged in the development of the state's flexibility plan.

Educators also played an important role in IDOE's efforts to develop the best possible teacher and principal evaluation legislation and model rubrics, described further in Principle 3. The Educator Evaluation Cabinet helped ensure the proposed laws and tools were fair, rigorous, and multifaceted. As part of IDOE's current efforts to implement Indiana's new educator effectiveness law, the state worked with The New Teacher Project (TNT) to launch the Indiana Teacher Effectiveness Pilot Program. Administrators, teachers and community members from six school districts are working together to implement new evaluation tools that provide meaningful feedback and recognize the best educators. This important initiative allows the IDOE to provide vital resources to schools while empowering local teachers and school leaders to be the driving force behind policies that will improve student learning and close achievement gaps. Specialized groups of educators—such as ELL teachers, special education teachers, art teachers and music teachers—are also helping to create guidance documents to support local school districts as they develop their own evaluation metrics and tools.

The development of Indiana's new state accountability model was an eighteen month process that incorporated input from key educational stakeholders in Indiana. In the spring of 2010, the IDOE convened two separate councils to serve as advisory committees for IDOE's development of the new A-F school accountability model. Based on the significantly distinct instruments used to measure the effectiveness of the schools encompassing grades K-8 compared to grades 9-12, it was quickly determined that two discrete models were needed. One group was dedicated to developing the Elementary and Middle Schools (E/MS) model while the other focused on the High Schools (HS) model.

Added after the above paragraph on page 16 of the Original Approved Waiver

During the amendment process for the flexibility request, IDOE worked with educators and stakeholders, gathered information and shared important information about the amendments

to the request. Beyond the time of the amendment request, stakeholder involvement in education decisions has been crucial to the work of IDOE. Many of the policy decisions made and issues addressed at the IDOE are related to the flexibility request and educator input continues to be sought on such issues.

In November 2013, the Indiana Association of School Superintendents, Indiana State Teacher's Association, Indiana Federation of Teachers, Indiana Association of School Principals, and Indiana School Board's Association were invited to a meeting with the Superintendent of Public Instruction and IDOE executive team to discuss the ESEA waiver and the implications for Focus and Priority Schools. These groups are contacted on an ongoing basis and their input is often used to facilitate implementation and communication of key initiatives.

IDOE routinely surveys educators to better assess needs from the field. Responses from educators across the state permits IDOE to better serve teachers and students. From professional development needs, to guidance documents on standards implementation, to reactions to teacher and principal evaluations – the voices of teachers and administrators are vital to the work of IDOE.

The Learning Connection website allows teachers to communicate directly with program specialists at IDOE, as well as with other educators in their field. Program specialists at IDOE directly reach the educators in their content areas, and Outreach Coordinators serve as an additional point of contact between LEAs and IDOE for the schools in regions across the state.

Regular contact with teachers, administrators and stakeholders allows IDOE the opportunity to continually discuss important education issues with those directly involved in the education of Hoosier children.

2. A description of how the SEA meaningfully engaged and solicited input on its request from other diverse communities, such as students, parents, community-based organizations, civil rights organizations, organizations representing students with disabilities and English Learners, business organizations, and Indian tribes.

During the initial waiver application, IDOE's Superintendents Advisory Committee, Principals Advisory Committee, School Boards Advisory Committee, ARC of Indiana and Indiana Council of Administrators of Special Education (ICASE) were all consulted and asked for feedback. A draft was published for review and a survey tool was established to collect organized feedback. A WebEx conference call was held to solicit discussion and feedback from the Committee of Practitioners. IDOE also shared a draft of the application with the local Stand for Children chapter to ensure buy-in—particularly surrounding altered accountability requirements.

Since the time of initial submission of the waiver application in November of 2011, IDOE staff communicated with a number of groups about the waiver, fielding feedback whenever it was offered. Those groups include the following:

- PTA Advisory Committee
- ARC of Indiana
- *Indiana* [Council of Administrators of Special Education](#)
- National Council on Educating Black Children
- Indianapolis Urban League
- Central Indiana Corporate Partnership
- Indiana Chamber of Commerce
- Stand for Children
- While it only met twice a year and **was** not scheduled to meet during the **initial** waiver process, IDOE **planned** to work with the state's migrant parent advisory council at its next meeting to fully communicate about the waiver.

In fact, the state enjoys a vast network of grassroots oriented groups ready to contribute to important initiatives. The following entities **were** established by the department or **were** invited to provide regular input to support efforts to increase communication and collaboration between the department and field:

- Indiana Dual Credit Advisory Council
- Indiana Association of Career and Technical Education Directors
- ESC Director's Advisory Committee
- Superintendents Advisory Council
- Principals Advisory Council
- School Boards Advisory Council
- PTA Advisory Committee
- School Counselors Advisory Committee
- ARC of Indiana
- *Indiana* [Council of Administrators of Special Education](#)
- Non-Public Education Advisory Committee
- Reading Advisory Council
- Indiana Education Reform Cabinet
- The Educator Learning Link Ambassadors Program
- Teacher Advisory Council (Teacher of the Year and Milken winners)
- Textbook Advisory Committee
- Indiana School Board Association
- Indiana Association of School Principals
- Indiana Association of Public School Superintendents
- National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
- National Council on Educating Black Children
- Indianapolis Urban League
- Central Indiana Corporate Partnership
- Indiana Chamber of Commerce
- Indianapolis Chamber of Commerce

- Teach Plus

As with outreach to educators, IDOE made stakeholder outreach and engagement a priority. To engage families, IDOE partnered with Indiana's Parent Teacher Association to make sure parents and guardians received important information about IDOE's efforts to provide more educational options, increase accountability, recognize and reward great educators, and increase local flexibility. IDOE recognized the important role families play in educating their children. To help encourage and support parental involvement, IDOE created and introduced The Parent Pledge in 2010, a contract between teachers and parents meant to foster greater parental engagement. More than 4,000 parents in more than 200 schools signed the pledge, and several schools developed their own locally tailored versions of this written commitment.

In the development of the state's flexibility plan, IDOE made every effort to engage stakeholders, gather information, and build upon partnerships with a variety of community groups. For example, the Arc of Indiana, established in the mid-1950s by parents of children with intellectual and other developmental disabilities, worked with IDOE in all aspects of the state's education reform agenda. These partnerships are particularly powerful when it comes to the state's efforts to turn around its chronically underperforming schools and school districts, which often have a higher concentration of at-risk and high-needs students. To help organize public meetings and share important information with parents and community members in these school communities, IDOE worked closely with civic organizations such as the Urban League, the NAACP, Indiana's Commission on Hispanic and Latino Affairs, and the Indiana Civil Rights Commission. Based on the positive feedback from these groups as part of the state's early turnaround efforts, IDOE made community outreach and engagement a key accountability metric for schools under state intervention.

Corporate partnerships also played a critical role in Indiana's reform efforts. Companies like Comcast partnered with IDOE to rapidly expand the availability of certain technologies, like broadband internet and on-demand educational programming, for Indiana schools. To help local school districts save money and retain instructional staff to drive more dollars directly to student learning, companies like Cummins (based in Columbus, Indiana) partnered with IDOE to send corporate Six Sigma experts into schools to identify cost-saving opportunities so more dollars can flow into Indiana's classrooms. More than ten additional companies stepped forward to offer similar efficiency training and support to our local schools. Support such as this from corporate groups helped to undergird the state's efforts to keep the focus of schools on quality instruction.

As with plans to continue collaborative efforts with teachers, IDOE will also maintain efforts to reach out and engage education stakeholders. One way Indiana expanded its collaborative and outreach efforts, in the initial application was by adding an Educator Effectiveness Communications and Outreach Manager as well as an Educator Effectiveness Communications Specialist. These two new positions worked together to develop, organize and execute outreach and engagement strategies for Indiana educators (including strategies aimed at parents and students) and worked to partner with key community stakeholders.

Added after the above paragraph on page 19 of the Original Approved Waiver

During the amendment process for the flexibility request, IDOE worked with educators and stakeholders, gathered information and shared important information about the amendments to the request. A stakeholders group met to review the request. This group included:

- Indiana Association of Public School Superintendents
- Indiana School Board Association
- Indiana State Teachers Association
- Indiana Federation of Teachers
- Indiana Non-public School Association

Additionally, larger group stakeholders met regularly with the Superintendent of Public Instruction throughout 2013 and 2014 on a variety of topics included within this request. Stakeholder input has been vital in decisions made by IDOE. The larger stakeholders group includes representatives from:

- Indiana Association of School Principals
- Indiana Association of Public School Superintendents
- Indiana School Board Association
- Indiana State Teachers Association
- Indiana Federation of Teachers
- Indiana Non-public School Association
- Indiana Charter School Association
- Indiana's Parent Teacher Association
- Indiana Small and Rural School Association
- Indiana Urban Schools Association

The State Board of Education, the Governor's Office and the Indiana General Assembly's legislative leadership were also a part of the amendment process, as their staff participated in regular meetings, reviewed draft amendments and offered input. The State Board of Education held two special meetings in the Spring and Summer of 2014 to discuss the updates to the ESEA flexibility request. IDOE has seen an increase in interest in Indiana's waiver from these key state stakeholders. IDOE is encouraged to have the commitment from these partners in maintaining the flexibility granted by the US Department of Education in this request.

In addition, the entirety of the amendments captured herein were posted online for public comment. Ensuring that all Hoosiers had an opportunity to comment on the amendments.